

ON THE MOVE

New Hampshire Department of Transportation Newsletter



Early Spring 2023



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All Hands on Deck!

That is the NHDOT Winter Maintenance Mantra!

Many people know that for the last several years the NHDOT has been struggling each winter season to get drivers into trucks and keep the state roads clear of ice and snow. Retirements and other departures have left lots of shoes to fill. As usual our dedicated Maintenance Team of Highway Maintainers, internal volunteers and hired contractors have always found a way to get the job done. It's hard work with long hours – these men and women have sacrificed many hours of sleep, holidays with families, winter vacations in sunny spots, and events with their kids just to name a few. Despite that I am always impressed by their positive spirit and can do attitude. Many times I have thanked them for their outstanding work and the response I hear most is "Hey it's what we do!"

To these Full-Time NHDOT Highway Maintenance snow-fighters - THANK YOU!

We know that you literally answer the call, dozens of times each year, during all hours of the night, even on weekends, leave home and drive to a local maintenance shed to treat or plow snow, sometimes for 12, 18 or 24 hours or for days on end to make the roads safe for the traveling public. It truly is a tough job and overtime pay can never really compensate for the time lost.

I also want to thank the contractors that come out to help us each year. These men and women also answer the late-night calls and drive to a local shed to help keep the roads clear. Currently these contractors make up 53% of the trucks that treat and plow NH state roads. We are grateful for their

many years of support, we could not do it without them.

Lastly – A Special Thank You to our volunteers. We have over 80 employees with CDLs that normally work in our Bridge Maintenance, Mechanical Services, Traffic and other bureaus that have worked two jobs throughout the winter. And this year we reached out beyond the NHDOT and workers from other state agencies have answered the call as well.

These volunteers left their coworkers and the work that needed to get done in their bureau. Some of their stories are included in this issue. We are grateful to them and their Agencies, NHDES, NH Employment Security and NH Department of Corrections for allowing us to steal them away to help keep the roads clear.

Winter Maintenance is truly an all hands on deck effort by many people at NHDOT. Mechanical Services personnel are likewise involved all through a storm to get trucks back in service and keep the drivers on the road. Dispatchers and Office support staff play a critical role as well. The TMC manages the storm center throughout the winter storm events as well as providing critical coverage to the districts. Finance and HR has been indispensable in getting volunteers on board, bonuses and stipends paid, and transfers taken care of. It takes everyone working together to be successful, and we have been successful!

Proud to be, NHDOT!

Dave Rodrigue, NHDOT Assistant Commissioner

GETTING IT DONE THIS WINTER

This issue of the highlights our Winter Maintenance employees. It's really a team that includes TMC technicians, NHDOT highway maintainers, hired contractors, and some other CDL drivers that normally work at other NHDOT Bureaus or state agencies. All of the State employees work Monday thru Friday, 7 am to 3:30 pm, or 8 am to 4 pm depending on their position. There isn't a second shift or any extra drivers, although the Patrol Foremen will fill in when someone gets sick or needs a break during a long winter storm – it's "All Hands on Deck," doing what it takes to get the job done.



We asked a few employees several questions - what do you normally do, what do you do when it snows, what is it like, and how do you stay awake for 12, 24 or 30 straight hours of work?

Ryan Worsman works in the NHDOT Highway Maintenance Bureau as a Project Manager. During the week he assembles and reviews the documents needed to build an RFP for a new salt shed, fuel station or a new maintenance shed for the NHDOT. When it starts snowing he leaves his desk at the Hazen Drive office and heads to Shed 505 in Bow to help. He doesn't have a CDL so he doesn't plow but he does have experience using backhoes and front-end loaders. During a winter storm he helps by loading the trucks with salt and keeping the yard clear. He also pitches in when needed by driving the foreman's truck to salt some roads, and on and off ramps.

What do you like about Winter Maintenance Work?

He worked with heavy equipment at a previous job and enjoys being able to see progress and watch the roads being cleared, and he likes being part of this team.

What keeps you going during a long storm?

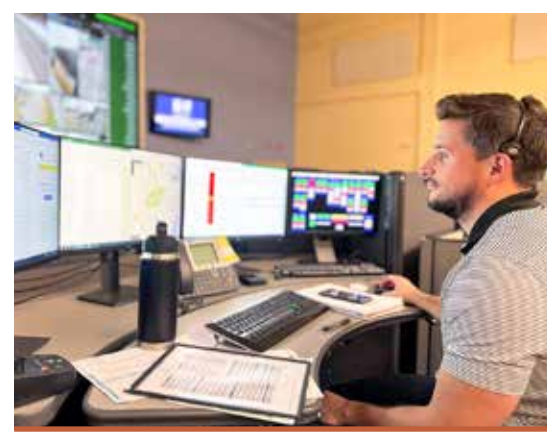
A pot of coffee and spearmint gum really help, and the knowledge that his family and others need these roads need to be clear for commuting, everyone has a mentality of "constant vigilance" that keeps them motivated. It can also be really exhausting, especially if you work til midnight and then get a 4 am "call out", it can be really hard to put those boots back on.

Has this forced you to make any changes in your life?

If he is called in during the day, and has a few minutes

waiting for the trucks to return for more salt, he set up a saw-horse desk at the shed and responds to emails to keep his other work (construction projects) moving along. "Life in the shed is constantly evolving and reacting to things that change or break, like Mother Nature or equipment issues. Sometimes it means helping out by clearing tree limbs out of the road, or helping to fix equipment in the field or at the shed." This is Ryan's 2nd winter as a volunteer, he has three young kids at home (a new baby just before Christmas), and he knows he's missing out, but he also knows it's incredibly important and that's why he's there pitching in.

Sean Larner works for the NHDOT Construction Bureau as an Engineering Technician II. Throughout the spring, summer and fall he supervises paving projects to ensure



that the contractors are following the contract plans and specifications. Although he's not plowing or salting the state roads, he is helping with winter maintenance.

Sean is on loan for the winter season to the Transportation Management Systems Organization (TSMO), also known as NH's Transportation Management Center. He's learning how this key NHDOT bureau coordinates the responses by emergency and NHDOT crews to traffic and winter-related events. Susan Klasen, TSMO bureau administrator stated that "Sean has been a big help, we are short-handed and he's been here through several storms. We will miss him when he returns to Construction."

What do you like about working for the TMC?

Sean likes being at TSMO and seeing how NHDOT bureaus and districts work together. He feels that this knowledge will help him when he is back in the field working this spring - He understands what information the TSMO operators need when for construction lane closures.

Has this forced you to make any changes in your life?

Sometimes he will start earlier or work later if there's a storm and they need the help with all the extra calls.

Sherry Dunham is a Technician at TSMO which operates 24/7, 365 days a year. She works midnight to 8 am and receives many calls each night - it could be icy road concerns, trees or wires down, or a crash and someone needs help. Sherry relays the information to State Police, and other emergency responders (if needed), and the appropriate NHDOT personnel. When she finishes dispatching/coordinating the assets, Sherry updates the TSMO log, the newengland511.org website, and posts messages to the NHDOT twitter accounts.

In the winter the calls increase, and this winter has become very hectic now because of the shortage of dispatchers in the maintenance districts. "If a snow squall hits and stretches across 2 or 3 districts, it can get really busy, really quick." Forecasted storms aren't as bad as coworkers come in early or stay late to help. "We're all pulling together to get this done this winter."

Has this forced you to make any changes in your life?

No. The extra work is stressful but she's OK with it, that's part of the job. But she feels for the plow drivers. "The big storms mean long hours for them, it has to be tough."

Roger Caron was hired in September 2012, as the Bureau of Traffic Safety and Environmental Coordinator. While in the office I conducted safety training, safety inspections, Workers Compensation claims, Defensive driving and CDL education, Environmental management, Electric and Gas reduction and recycling, fire extinguisher maintenance and fire system

testing. When I am out of the office, I work with crews out on the road who are short-handed. Heavy sign repairs and installation, Pavement Marking Traffic Control, etc.

Roger is an outdoor type of guy. "I love driving in bad weather and I love plowing. Being in the shed is like being with your second family. The men support one-another and everyone chips in to help. The storms can be long and drawn out or they can be fast and quick." He added that

Dedication is a huge part of all of the people that plow snow, it's a big part of how they keep going.

he has observed a tremendous amount of professionalism. Every driver expects every other driver to work as hard as they do.

What keeps you going during long storms?

"The key is to be well informed that a storm is coming to prepare with food and snacks to keep you going and to grab some sleep prior to the storm. Being hydrated and drinking plenty of fluid makes a huge difference in how long you can go plowing."

Has this forced you to make any changes in your life?

With the proper amount of planning, staying ahead of the storm is key to making the big difference. Your significant other needs to maintain the house (wood stove) and care for the dogs while you are out. It is a huge sacrifice in putting your life on hold for the winter but a commitment that is rewarding when you know your work makes a difference to the traveling public.

Paul Sanders normally works days as a Construction Foreman, overseeing building and maintenance projects in District 6. During the winter he works as a night weather patrolman, "overnights" seven days a week, and when he's needed (pretty much all of this winter) he plows snow out of Patrol Shed 612 in North Hampton.

What keeps you going through a long storm?

Mostly coffee, a little adrenaline and the knowledge that "there's work to be done." He also drinks water, staying hydrated is important.

What do you like about this work? What adjustments have you made?

He likes being part of it and getting the roads cleared for the public, and the extra money helps. The schedule change is a big adjustment. He started the season working

overnights, now he's back to working days and works extra hours during the storms. But when it's not snowing he's getting estimates for projects and making plans spring-summer work.

Adam White is the Construction Foreman at the Mechanical Services Repair Facility in Twin Mountain. He's been with the NHDOT 26 years and normally repairs the plow trucks and equipment. This year he's also plowing Route 302. Adam says he has a new appreciation for what the drivers deal with, "It's difficult to see when the snow's coming down hard and flying off the plow."

He likes being part of the team (Patrol Shed 113) - "having a good crew of people to work with makes it easier." One morning a truck broke down and many from the team went out to help, "you form some bonds with people you work with."

What keeps you going through a long storm?

"You try to catch a break between the plow runs, a snack, some coffee - we keep each other going and that helps a lot."

Do you like doing this?

"You know that people are counting on you to get the roads cleaned up so people can travel on them but you do lose some sleep." Overall he says it's worth it, he enjoys time off in the summer and the state offers great benefits.

Unfortunately for us it will be his last winter with the NHDOT, Adam is retiring later this year. Congrats and thanks for all your help.

Kevin King is the District 5 Maintenance Supervisor and He oversees 18 Patrol Sheds that watch over state roads in the Merrimack, Hillsboro, and Rockingham counties. He has been the Maintenance Supervisor for the last 13 years and normally he's doing administrative work or training new guys to plow. He still does that work and for the last seven he's also been plowing when needed.

He said he's the "last resource" in the district and he's concerned, the shortage of drivers has forced him to spend a lot of time plowing.

Do you like doing this work?

He does enjoy the work and he's been with the Department for over 30 years. He worked his way up and has learned a lot over the years, including many life skills that he has taken home and shared with his family. "What do they say 'Jack of all trades, master of nothing,' I don't think I could have learned what I know anywhere else."

What keeps you going through a long storm?

There's coffee and snacks but "Dedication is a huge part of all of the people that plow snow, it's a big part of how they keep going."

Darryl Peasley is a recently retired NHDOT employee. He started at the Department of Safety and then joined NHDOT District 5 in 2004. After a few years at Patrol Sheds 526, 501 and 504, He became a Patrol Foreman at 504 and transferred to shed 505 in 2015.

Did you like doing this work?

He loved plowing and working for the NHDOT. The odd hours never bothered him, "during snow storms especially, you get the sense that you really accomplished



something, just look in the review mirror" and to him, that was important, because as he put it, "one of my friends, or a family member may be using this road."

Looking back, any final thoughts?

He said he was fortunate to have some good crews. "The toughest part of my job during the winter maintenance season, was knowing the crew was exhausted and having to send them out for another round. NHDOT has some dedicated people, they never complained, at least not to me. Now when I hear the trucks coming I just smile, I know they're out there, everyone's committed to getting the job done."

So you want to be a Snow Fighter

Can you make it in to give us a hand? The call comes in. Ok on my way. What time is it? Doesn't matter the work needs to be done. The men and women of NH DOT know what lies ahead. They understand the sacrifices they must make along with their partners who also sacrifice taking care of things at home. Most people are sleeping in warm beds or are relaxing at home. You get to the shed and the Patrol Foreman says, "what are you doing?" Get in your truck and go to the barn to get loaded up. You don't know whether it will be a salt run, a 6-hour storm or a 24-hour marathon. It doesn't matter the job has to get done. But I have already worked an 8-hour day so add another 20 to it and maybe you can head home. Until I started working in Winter Maintenance as a Snow Fighter, I never realized how professional, hard-working and detail oriented the women and men who plow for the state of NH are. Boss, 90% of the roads are clear...well go back and get the 10% that's left. It is truly a mind-bending type of work that requires a tremendous amount of mettle to get the job done. Conditions are horrible. From 5 pm to 9 pm everyone is racing around getting back from work or trying to get to a location as fast as possible. After 9 pm no traffic, pitch black, snow coming down so fast it's hard to see. Snow flakes the size of pancakes. You plow thru it. You know you are close to daybreak when you see the garbage trucks flying past you. Just then as the light comes out so you can see you wind down your window to keep focused on the job of plowing. After two seasons I have found I have a tremendous amount of admiration for these workers who dedicate and sacrifice their lives to keep our NH roads safe and passable. These are the workers that are Proud to Be NHDOT.

Training the Trainer

I began working for NHDOT in Traffic Bureau as a Safety and Environmental Coordinator September 21, 2012. Every spring I train new "Seasonal Help" for Pavement Marking Operations. Some of these young employees end up taking full-time jobs with NHDOT. On April 21, 2014, I trained a young man by the name of Nicholas Silvestri. He was a different kind of seasonal helper and came to work in an old lifted Toyota pickup truck that was meticulously maintained. He excelled working for Pavement Marking that year. We trained him to get his CDL-B license and he easily passed his first try. This seasonal employee had some serious talent when it came to fixing and maintaining mechanical equipment or anything else. He left Traffic Bureau to work for NHDOT in a shed in Belmont. Two years ago, I began to plow for the same shed that he ended up going to. Belmont Shed #314. I had a lot of over the road CDL-B driving for an Environmental Drilling company but very little experience plowing. I was paired up with Nick Silvestri who is now teaching me the techniques of plowing and winter maintenance. Hard to imagine that training a young seasonal employee would be training the trainer one day!

Thanks to Roger Caron, Bureau of Traffic, for these two Winter Maintenance stories.

The March 13-14th nor'easter walloped New Hampshire with heavy snow and high winds that knocked out power to thousands. Over 70 towns postponed elections and the Monadnock region of the state received over three feet of snow. Special thanks to all those who worked through it, almost 30 hours straight, to keep the roads clear. Thanks to District 4 for the photos below.



District 4 received over 3 feet of snow in many areas, including Stoddard on Route 123.



Route 10 in Gilsum.

Personnel Updates

New Hires:

Michael Romero - District 4, Crew 13
Michael R. Alexander - Mechanical Div-Concord
Stacy M. Ware - Mechanical Div-Concord
Robert E. Cooley-Hutchinson - District 4, Crew 8
Sarah M. Colon - Rail and Transit
Eric M. Castine - District 4, Crew 11
Zachary S. Corban - District 4, Crew 12
Nicholas R. Whitley - Highway Design
Tyler J. Aborn - Construction
Judith M. Arnold - Turnpikes-Hooksett
Joseph R. Morency - Right Of Way
Amy A. Morrison - District 6, Crew 13
Ronald R. Dunn - District 4, Crew 8
Shawn P. Lamoureux - District 5, Crew 15
Robert J. Siecinski - District 6, Crew 3
Hunter J. Jesseman - District 5, Crew 3
Tyler J. Miller - District 4, Crew 7
Janet L. Leavitt - Commissioner's Office
Lisa L. Lienhart - Finance And Contracts
Nathaniel T. Healey - Construction
Emily C. Paul - Traffic Dist Sign Crews
Shelley A. Zintel - Right Of Way
Robert E. Cooley-Hutchinson - District 4, Crew 8
Michael E. Donnelly - District 2, Crew 10
Bernard A. Kenney - Mechanical Div-Concord
Jeffrey E. Skiff - District 5, Crew 10
Jacqueline A. Welvaert - Human Resources

Retirees:

Robert Irwin - Planning & Community Assistance (39)
Shawn Murphy - Construction/Engineering Audit (38)
Theodore Kitsis - Construction/Engineering Audit (38)
John Hall - Construction/Engineering Audit (36)
Michael Soper - Planning & Community Assist. (35)
Richard Wentworth - Turnpikes (25)
Kevin James - District 1 (20)
Michael Roberts - District 3 (12)
Cynthia Sullivan - Right-Of-Way (5)

Promotions:

Alexis Martin - Dir of Policy and Administration, Commissioner's Office
Patrick Murphy - Highway Maintainer III, District 3
Richard Fry - Engineering Technician V, M&R
Edward Sperry - CE III, Construction/Engineering Audit
Michael Cook - Asst Highway Patrol Foreman, District 6
Jacob Belanger - Asst Hwy Patrol Foreman, District 5
Peter Lapierre - Engineering Technician V, Traffic
Stacey Dearborn - Administrative Assistant I, HR
David Rodrigue - Assistant Commissioner
Michael Strozewski - CE III, Construction/Eng Audit
Nickie Hunter - CE VII, Construction/Engineering Audit
Shannon Lafave - Asst Highway Patrol Foreman, D4
Patrick Sweet - Communications Technician I, TSMO
Aaron Shaw - Highway Maintainer III, District 3
Joshua Hicks - Survey Team Technician V, ROW
Deirdre Nash - Civil Engineer V, Materials & Research
David Kenneally - Highway Patrol Foreman, District 5
Nancy Spaulding - Principal Engineer, District 3
Jonathan Bradstreet - CE III, Construction/Eng Audit
John Gryval - Construction Foreman, District 5
Lucas Zalenski - Highway Maintainer III, District 5
David Kammer - Environmentalist IV, Environment
Cody Smith - Highway Maintainer II, District 2
Stephen Morrill - Bridge Maintainer II, Bridge Maint
William Price - CE II, Construction/Engineering Audit
Michael Caron - Highway Maintainer III, Turnpikes
Matthew Mclaughlin - Civil Engineer II, Hwy Design
Michael Brochu - Bridge Maintainer II, Bridge Maint
Ryan Castine - Highway Maintainer II, District 4
Paula Nash - Administrator IV, Human Resources
Kevin Nyhan - Administrator IV, Environment

Service Awards

5 Years:

Karen J. Donaldson - Finance
Dillon C. Lowe - District 1
Brent R. Medas - District 3
Robert J. Boynton - District 5
John F. Menz - Bridge Maintenance
Paul F. Coddington - Right-Of-Way
Travis E. Spencer - District 1
Mitchell W. Ashby - Bridge Maintenance
Jason B. Pohopek - Right-Of-Way
Natassia S. Simons - Turnpikes
William M. Willis - Commissioner's Office
Nikole R. Twombly - Commissioner's Office
Arron F. Lavoie - District 3
Harvey G. Stinson - Bridge Maintenance

10 Years:

John T. Poisson - Bridge Design
Troy A. Ranfos - District 6
Steven R. Hallee - Turnpikes
Jennifer E. Anderson - Turnpikes

15 Years:

Nicholas B. Goulas Jr - Bridge Design
William P. McDonough - District 2
Raymond R. Burovac - Mechanical Services
Randolph B. White - Mechanical Services
Kathleen Mulcahey-Hampson - Commissioner's Office

20 Years:

Ashok H. Kakadia - Construction/Engineering Audit
Brian J. Mayo - District 6
Matthew C. Powers - Highway Design

35 Years:

Kevin R. Winn - Construction/Engineering Audit

*Committed to
Excellence, Safety,
Innovation, and
the Future...*

Around the NHDOT

After 37 years of faithful service Pete Stamnas has retired. Pete Stamnas worked his way up through the ranks and bureaus and became the Director of Project Development in 2016. During his time as Director he approved over 400 projects worth over \$1.2 billion. In his final speech he thanked the many mentors that helped him along the way and some of the tireless workers that worked with him to complete the design of numerous projects including the Scammell Bridge, and the Salem-Manchester I-93 Widening project.



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*Cover Photo by Ryan Worsman;
Trucks from the Bow 505 Patrol Shed heading out on to clear the March 13-15th Winter Storm.*